DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 397 852 IR 055 945

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TITLE Irrepressible Reformer: A Biography of Melvil Dewey.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-8389-0680-X
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 403p.
AVAILABLE FROM Book Order Fulfillment, American Library Association, 155 North Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60606-1719; 1-800-545-2433, press 7 to order; fax: 312-836-9958 (ALA Order No. 0680-x-2036; members: $31.50; nonmembers: $35).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Historical Materials (060)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Anti Semitism; Biographies; Change Agents; Educational Administration; Governing Boards; Innovation; *Library Development; *Library Directors; Library Education
IDENTIFIERS *Dewey (Melvil); *Dewey Decimal Classification; Library History; New York State Library; New York State Regents

ABSTRACT

This book is a biography of Melvil Dewey, the man behind the Dewey Decimal Classification System. Tracing Dewey's life and early influences that shaped it, the book explores Dewey's employment experiences, enterprises, and innovations and present a range of views on them; he was seen as an organizational genius but also as arrogant, manipulative, immoral, and bigoted. The book gives accounts of Dewey's experiences as New York State Regents Secretary, State Librarian, director of the New York State Library School, a period which ended in a public dispute over his exclusionary treatment of Jews, and explores Dewey's further troubles with anti-Semitism and sexual harassment as he built the Lake Placid Club in New York State into a $15 million property. The book is divided into three parts: (1) Launching a 'World Work,' 1851-1888; (2) The Albany Years, 1889-1906; and (3) The Lake Placid Years, 1906-1931. Fifteen figures and 27 plates are included throughout the work. An epilogue sums up Dewey's historical legacy. A list of abbreviations used in footnotes to designate sources is also provided. (Author/AEF)

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